

includes new health care choices for seniors.

I heard something about unfairness over here a moment ago, but currently this is unfair. Medicare recipients are limited to a one-size-fits-all type of contract designed 30 years ago. It is time to expand those options. Why? Because giving seniors the right to choose from a variety of quality health care plans will create competition among health care providers, it will drive down costs, and it will allow seniors to pick a plan that meets their individual health care needs.

My colleagues, our plan is about more choice, not less. More; we do not force seniors to give up their current coverage. If a senior likes the current system, he or she can stay in traditional fee-for-service Medicare. No questions asked. But if a senior wants to try something new, maybe a plan that covers prescription drugs and limits out-of-pocket costs, there is one for him. We provide that option.

Mr. Speaker, more health care choices for seniors, not less. It is that simple.

#### MONEY BUYS ACCESS—PROTEST GETS YOU ARRESTED

(Mr. MILLER of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, today, senior citizens can choose their doctor, their hospital, any kind of medical care they want under current Medicare rules. Why are the Republicans offering more choice; why are the Republicans forcing more choice? Because the Golden Rule Insurance Co. gave \$157,000 to GOPAC, the political arm of Speaker GINGRICH, another \$45,000 to Speaker GINGRICH's two campaigns. They sponsored Speaker GINGRICH's TV show, and they have given almost \$2 million to Republican causes. That is why they want to force senior citizens into medical savings accounts.

Mr. Speaker, I say to my colleagues, if you have money, you have access to the Republican plan for Medicare. The doctors met with Speaker GINGRICH in the middle of the markup of the Medicare bill in the Committee on Ways and Means. They got \$3 billion—\$3 billion. Golden Rule gives money to campaigns; they got millions of dollars, hundreds of millions of dollars, in businesses.

Senior citizens approached the chairman of the committee yesterday and asked about the future of Medicare. They were arrested. I say to my colleagues, if you have money, you can cut deals. If you need health care, you get arrested.

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#### SAVE, PRESERVE, AND STRENGTHEN MEDICARE

(Mrs. KELLY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. KELLY. Mr. Speaker, yesterday we took a number of positive steps forward in our effort to save, preserve, and strengthen Medicare.

The House Ways and Means Committee passed their portions of the Medicare Preservation Act and the American Medical Association—one of the largest health care providers in the country—endorsed the House Republican plan.

When I first ran for Congress, Mr. Speaker, I ran on the promise of reform—repeal of the status quo and change for the better.

Our Medicare plan delivers on this promise of reform. By increasing seniors' control of their health care dollars, providing greater choice of providers and ensuring long-term solvency, we are keeping our word.

There are those who will continue to throw stones at us from the sidelines, but as we enter the final phase of our efforts to save Medicare, I would encourage them to join us.

The American people are sick of the politics-as-usual mentality that they are expressing and want us to save Medicare.

The medical care of 37 million people is on the line, and until the Democrats face up to this fact rather than their own reelections, the American people will continue to discount all that they say and all that they do.

#### THE REPUBLICAN PLAN IS A MERCY KILLING OF MEDICARE

(Mr. DOGGETT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, the bloom is finally off the Republican pay-more-get-less plan. There it is, in all its ugly splendor. Let us look at the real details of the plan. To protect the Medicare trust fund, let us drain 4 years of revenues from the fund. To fight Medicare fraud, cut any fraud law enforcement. To reduce soaring medical costs, let us permit doctors to charge higher fees. That is the only way they will support the plan. To secure last-minute support from one of America's fattest lobbies, let us give them a sweetheart deal that they say will mean billions of dollars for them.

Yes, this is real Republican doctoring of Medicare, doctoring it up so all Americans will know what it is. But the model for that doctoring is Dr. Kevorkian. Our Republican colleagues really have in mind a mercy killing for Medicare. To save Medicare, let us kill it. That is the real Republican pay-more-get-less plan.

#### DEMOCRATS ARE SCARING SENIOR CITIZENS ON MEDICARE ISSUE

(Mr. CHABOT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, the Democrats in Congress would like everyone to believe that Republicans are cutting Medicare, allegedly to give tax cuts to the rich. That is garbage and they know it. First of all, we are not cutting Medicare. Our plan will slow the growth, give seniors more options, all in order to save, protect, and preserve Medicare, to keep it from going bankrupt.

Second, our tax cuts in the Contract With America are paid for. They were paid for last April, when we passed our bill on the floor. Who will benefit from these tax cuts? Every family in America. Our \$500 tax credit for children is the main part of our tax relief package. Do Democrats think any family with a child is rich? Apparently they do. They seem to think that anybody who has a job in America is a rich person. I do not think that is true.

Mr. Speaker, together we should be working to save Medicare, not just trying to scare our senior citizens, which apparently is what the Democrats are stooping to doing.

#### CUTS IN MEDICARE WOULD HURT OUR MOST VULNERABLE CITIZENS

(Mr. SANDERS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to protest as strongly as I can the disastrous cuts the Republicans are proposing for Medicare and Medicaid. In my small State of Vermont, 67,000 senior citizens and disabled Vermonters will have to pay higher premiums and higher deductibles for a weakened Medicare system. Most of those 67,000 Vermonters today are having a hard time paying for their prescription drugs and other health care needs. Cuts in Medicare will be absolutely disastrous for them. To add insult to injury, the Republican Medicaid cuts will be terrible for low-income seniors, for the children, who are the most vulnerable people in our society. In Vermont, at least 20,000 Vermonters, low-income kids, low-income elderly, and low-income disabled, stand at risk of losing their entire Medicaid coverage. That is wrong.

#### NO AMERICAN SOLDIER SHOULD SERVE UNDER THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMAND

(Mr. FUNDERBURK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FUNDERBURK. Mr. Speaker, last year when American soldiers were killed over Iraq, Vice President GORE told the widows and orphans of those